

Message Text

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SUBJ : AGRARIAN SITUATION IN SONORA

REFS : A) MEXICO 15771 (76); B) MEXICO 376

SUMMARY : GOM IS ACTIVELY BUT QUIETLY PURSUING POLITICAL,
AS OPPOSED TO LEGAL, SOLUTION TO CONFLICT BETWEEN CAMPESINO
ORGANIZATIONS AND PRIVATE LANDOWNERS IN STATE OF SONORA.
NEGOTIATING PROCESS BEING ABETTED BY REMOVAL OF PRI
AGRARIAN LEADERS LOYAL TO FORMER SECRETARY OF AGRARIAN
REFORM GOMEZ VILLANUEVA. END SUMMARY.

1. BOTH AGRARIAN REFORM SECRETARY JORGE ROJO LUJO AND
LAWYER FOR SONORA LANDOWNERS KGNACIO BURGOA TOLD EMBOFFS
IN SEPARATE INTERVIEWS (JANUARY 14 AND JANUARY 17) THAT
TALKS HAVE BEEN UNDERWAY FOR SOME WEEKS BETWEEN
CAMPESINO REPRESENTATIVES AND PRIVATE LANDOWNERS TO
REACH A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT THAT COULD OBLIGE
EARLY JUDICIAL ACTION REGARDING THE CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE
OF AMPARO IN SONORA. AGRARIAN REFORM SECRETARY ROJO
AND MINISTER OF INTERIOR REYES HEROLES HAVE ON
PRESIDENTIAL INSTRUCTION BEEN PLAYING ACTIVE ROLE AS
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MEDIATORS BETWEEN THE CONFLICTING PARTIES. ACCORDING
TO ROJO, BOTH SIDES CONTEMPLATE A SETTLEMENT THAT
WOULD ALLOW "AUTHENTIC" CAMPESINOS WHO OCCUPIED SONORA
LANDS FOLLOWING PRESIDENTE CHEVERRIA'S NOVEMBER DECREE
TO RETAIN SOME (ROJO MENTIONED 17,000 HECTARES) OF THE
OCCUPIED LAND. THE REST WOULD BE RETURNED TO THE
PRIVATE LANDOWNERS. (PRESUMABLY, ALTHOUGH THIS IS BY

NO MEANS CLEAR, OWNERS WOULD BE COMPENSATED IN SOME FORM FOR THE LAND CEDED TO THE CAMPESINOS.) THE GOM WOULD ALSO DEVELOP AN ADDITIONAL 20,000 HECTARES OF PUBLIC LAND FOR SUBSEQUENT DISTRIBUTION AMONG CAMPESINOS NOT BENEFITTED BY DISTRIBUTION OF THE 17,000 HECTARES.

2. COMMENTS BY IGNACIO BURGOA, RECOGNIZED EXPERT ON AMPARA AND LAWYER FOR PRIVATE LANDOWNERS IN SONORA, TENDED TO CONFIRM VIEW THAT NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF AGRARIAN SITUATION IN SONORA ALONG GENERAL LINES CITED BY ROJO LUJO IS LIKELY. IN SUMMARIZING LEGAL COMPLEXITIES OF SONORA SITUATION, BURGOA WAS CANDID IN STATING THAT POLITICAL SOLUTION WOULD PRECEDE ANY LEGAL DETERMINATION BY SUPREME COURT. INDEED, HE STATED THAT FEDERAL ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE SILVA HAS DELAYED RULING ON LANDOWNERS RIGHTS TO AMPARO PENDING OUTCOME OF INFORMAL TALKS BETWEEN PARTIES IN CONFLICT. ONLY AFTER POLITICAL SOLUTION IS NEGOTIATED, HE SAID, WOULD JUDGE RULE ON FURTHER QUESTION OF AMPARO WHICH COULD THEN BE APPEALED TO SUPREME COURT BY EITHER PARTY. IN HIS JUDGMENT SUCH A LEGAL RULING BY THE SUPREME COURT MAY NOT BE NECESSARY IF BOTH LANDOWNERS AND CAMPESINOS REACH ACCEPTABLE POLITICAL AGREEMENT.

3. COMMENT : NEGOTIATING PROCESS BETWEEN GOM, AGRARIAN LEADERS, AND PRIVATE LANDOWNERS IS BEING ABETTED BY HOUSECLEANING NOW UNDERWAY IN PRI-AFFILIATED NATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF CAMPESINOS, (CNC). NEW CNC LEADER RAMIREZ MIJARES
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(SEE REF B) IS BUSILY "RENOVATING" THE LEADERSHIP OF CNC REGIONAL COMMITTEES, CRONIES OF RADICAL CLIQUE CONSISTING OF FORMER CNC LEADER SALCEDO MONTEON AND FORMER SECRETARIES OF AGRARIAN REFORM GOMEZ VILLANEUVA AND BARRA GARCIA ARE BEING OUSTED AND REPLACED WITH MODERATE LEADERS DISPOSED TO SUPPORT NEW GOM EMPHASIS ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND "SOCIAL PEACE" IN RURAL SECTOR.
THOMPSON

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